THE .....

Fatal Loss

OF A NEGATIVE.

BY MRS. ALEXANDER.

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"Don't laugh at my jealous fancy, but—but supose he persuaded Gwen to accompany him!"

"Impossible, sir!" was the indignant answer. "You show your ignorance of my niece by such a suspicion.'

"But, uncle, women are so queer and flighty, and—and just see how this wire gives color to my idea! Why need she send it at all? It would have been no great matter if James had gone to meet several trains. Was it not calculated to keep the whole afternoon free? See, there are only three trains in the day from R—, and Everard could have met her and started by the mail train for Paris, or God knows where. He had some power over her. I heard him say—" and he repeated the story of the ball which he had told Marling in the morning.

At first Mr. Ardell was indignant and incredulous, but as Blount persisted and insisted on the weakness, gullibility and fancifulness of women, especially young ones, the elder man grew restless, irritable and blustering.

"Time will show, sir!" cried Blount at last, looking at the heavy classical bronze clock over the fireplace; "and I haven't left myself too much time to get to the station by 10.20. God grant I may bring back Gwendoline safe and sound to you. I may exaggerate things, but I hardly hope to find her!"

"Nonsense, Philip. I believe you are out of your mnd; but you have made me very uncomfortable," returned Mr. Ardell, ringing the bell. "Come back as fast as you can. Whistle a cab for Mr. Blount," he continued, as James appeared in answer to the bell.

"You must not agitate yourself too much, my dear uncle," said Blount, rising and feeling some compunction at having worked up his host to such a pitch of uneasiness, and he left the room.

A hansom already awaited him, and he was soon rattling toward Paddington.

By this time he had reached a condition of mind which induced him to seek comfort by recapitulating his uncle's arguments against himself.

Suppose his horrible suspicions proved true. Mr. Ardell would certainly cut off Gwen with a shilling—or, perhaps, a farthing—possibly all his uncle's fortune might come to him. "But I want Gwen, too," he thought. "I have always been fond of her. There's such go and style about her, and just lately she has been so sweet and friendly. What bright, mischievous brown eyes she has. There's no girl in our set fit to tie her shoes. No, all the money wouldn't be worth much, at least just now, if Gwen slipped through my fingers. Hullo! the arrival platform. Cabby, mind what you are about I want to meet the 10.20 from R—, and it's 10.17 now."

In a few seconds he had alighted and was pacing the platform.

The rush and bustle of the early evening trains were over. The great station looked gloomy and deserted—very few porters were about and the 10.20 was evidently a thing of no importance.

Blount paced slowly up and down revolving the possibilities of his position.

Gwen was certainly what is called a girl of spirit, not to say slightly headstrong, and there was no saying what a young woman of that description might, could or would do. What motive had she in sending that mysterious telegram, if it were not to mask her movements? "Here, porter; isn't the 10.20 from R— behind time?"

"Well, it often is—but it's signaled now, sir."

A few more uneasy, miserable minutes and the panting engine was alongside the platform, while the porters were opening and banging the doors. The train was fairly full of better class 'Arrys and 'Arriets who had been boating, plump mothers with numerous olive branches returning from excursions along the river, lover-like couples of a higher grade, eager to jump into hansoms as if feaful of being behind time; men in flannels, girls in muslins and shady hats, for it had been a glorious summer's day. But no sign of the tall distinguished figure he sought for so feverishly. His keen eyes searched every carriage and scanned each group. Soon they were dispersed like grains of pepper thrown on water, while he was alone and despairing. Certainly Gwen Dashwood was not coming home tonight. He left the station and drove back to Lonsdale Gardens as fast as he could.

"No sign of her!" he exclaimed, rushing into the dining room, where Mr. Ardell, thoroughly infected by his nephew's fears, was pacing to and fro.

"Not come!" cried the old man aghast. "Why, what—what can be the meaning of this—this extraordinary disappearance! Something unexpected has occurred. She has missed her train. She has been over-persuaded to stay the night—many things might have happened, but your—your unwarrantable surmise is—too—too preposterous. If Gwen were guilty of deceiving me, I'd—I'd—renounce her forever."

"You must not be too hard. If we can only prevent scandal. I should still be ready to carry out your wishes. I—"

"What is to be done next, Philip?" resumed his uncle as if he had not heard him.

"I'm sure I hardly know, sir. Shall I call at Everard's club tomorrow and ascertain if possible when he returns? But of course he will leave little or no trace of his movements."

"I am quite certain you do Gwen the greatest injustice, but, my dear boy, come to me tomorrow morning early, as early as you can. There is not much doing tomorrow, that case is not on till—till Wednesday, and young Pounceby can manage very well, at least for a few hours, and we must know something certain by the afternoon. No use in expecting her tonight, Philip. Take some brandy and soda before you go. I want some myself."

Both felt a little more hopeful after partaking of this refreshment, when they parted with some solemnity, and Blount made his way to his own place, where he passed a wretched night, harassed by frightful dreams, in which he found himself minus both the "beauz yeux" and the "cassette," of which he hoped to possess himself.

After a hasty visit to the office, for he never neglected business, Blount hurried to Lonsdale Gardens.

"Well, Philip, have you telegraphed?" was Mr. Ardell's salutation.

"No, sir, I thought you would, and two wires would seem ridiculous and suspicious."

"What matter, so long as we get information?" cried his uncle testily.

"I will go and telegraph myself," said Blount, anxious to be up and doing, and bent his steps to a central office at some distance, fancying it would be more rapidly dispatched than from the little local postoffice in a baker's shop. Returning, a runaway horse and a smashed vehicle impeded his progress, and on his arrival James received him with smiles. "Miss Dashwood is upstairs, sir—arrived just after you went out!"

Blount rushed upstairs, two steps at a time, flung open the door and beheld his uncle standing on the hearth-rug, playing nervously with his "pince-nez," while, still in her hat—a very becoming one—an open telegram in her hand, Gwen was walikng up and down in (not to put too fine a point upon it) a towering rage.

"To make all this fuss about nothing!" she was saying. "To insult me with such suspicions, and you, uncle, to believe them! Ah, Philip, I wonder you dare to look me in the face! I know it is all your doing. You have upset Uncle Ardell frightfully, he is quit ill. How dare you accuse me of such baseness! Yes, uncle has told me everything, and I see that you are a low-minded, disagreeable creature, and I was beginning to think better of you. The whole mystery has arisen from a mistake, either of mine or the telegraph clerk at R—. The telegram I thought I sent—that I intended to send—was: 'Shall not be home tonight.' Either he or I omitted the negative!"

"My dear Gwen," began Blount, imploringly.

"Don't 'dear' me!" she interrupted. "As to Mr. Everard, he had a quarrel with his fiancee, an old schoolfellow of mine. I have helped to reconcile them, and she has asked him to meet her and her mother in Paris."

"But, Gwen, if you knew my feelings!"

"If you had kept them to yourself and not tried to make mischief with I might forgive; as it is, I shall have no my uncle, and lower me in his opinion, more to do with you, Philip."

And she kept her word.

"How Dare You Accuse Me of Such Baseness."

A Use for Learning.

From Good News.

Little Girl—Mamma says I must study grammar this term.

Little Boy—Wot's that for?

Little Girl—That's so I can laugh when folks makes mistakes.

Do You Want?

Do you want some real estate,
Or a box of paper collars?
Do you lack a chicken coop
Or a pocketful of dollars?
Make an ad—make an ad.

Do you want a billy goat?
Would sell a house and lot?
Want to rent a lumber yard
Or a tea or coffee pot?
Make an ad—make an ad.

Have you got a horse to trade,
Or a stovepipe, or a bell,
Or a gold mine, or a store,
Or a block of stock to sell?
Make an ad—make an ad.

—Printer's Ink.

A CHRISTMAS BALL.

Instructions That May Possibly Aid a Perplexed Gift-Giver.

A Christmas ball is a pretty trifle to give an absent friend. The heart of the ball may be some pretty little gift, a gold thimble, an emery ball, a silver spool or something of that nature. around this silk floss or zephyr is wound with a quotation appropriate to the person for whom the ball is intended, put in and covered with the floss or zephyr.

These quotations may be taken from a favorite author of the giver or the one who receives the present, or they may be made personal in character, as—

"She was a phantom of delight
When first she beamed upon my sight;"
or,
"Her eyes as stars of twilight fair;
Like twilight, too, her dusky hair."

When the ball has been made the desired size a handsome pair of scissors, a gold bodkin, a beautiful needle case or any gift the donor fancies may be attached to the end of the thread.

As the ball is unwound in embroidering, knitting or crocheting, as the case may be, the quotations come to light unexpectedly and give pleasure long after Christmas day has passed into the shadows of memory, while the heart of the ball adds the final bit of pleasure when the last thread is unwound.

BOURGET ON FOOT BALL.

Frenchman Describes a Game That He Saw During His Sojourn in America—His Opinion of the Sport.

Paul Bourget, the French author who recently visited America, is writing a series of articles for the New York Herald on what he saw in America. He thus describes a game of foot ball:

Among the distractions of sport, none has been more fashionable for several years past than foot ball. I was present last autumn, in the peaceful and gentle city of Cambridge, at a game between the champions of Harvard college—the team, as they say here—and the champions of the University of Pennsylvania. I must hark back to my journey in Spain to recall a fever of the people equal to that which palpitated along the road between Boston and the arena where the match was to take place. The electric cars followed one another at intervals of a minute, filled with passengers, who, seated or standing, or clinging to the steps, were pressed together, crushing each other. Although the days of November are cruelly cold under a Massachusetts sky, the rendezvous, as at Rome for gladiatorial combats, was a kind of enclosure in the open air. Two steps away from Memorial hall and from the other buildings of the university wooden stands were erected. On these stands were perhaps 15,000 spectators, and in the immense quadrilateral hemmed in by the stands were two teams composed of eleven youths each waiting for the signal to commence.

What a tremor in that crowd, composed not of the people of the lower classes, but of well to do people, and how the excitement increased as time went on! All held in their hands small, red flags and wore tufts of red flowers. Scarlet is the color of the Harvard boys. Although a movement of feverish excitement ran though this crowd it was not enough for the enthusiasts of the game. Propagators of enthusiasm, students with smooth, pinched faces, passed between the benches and increased still further the ardor of the public by uttering the war cry of the university, the "Rah! rah! rah!" thrice repeated, which terminates in the frenzied call, "Haaar-vard." The partisans of the "Pennsy's" replied by a similar cry, and in the distance, above the palings of the enclosure, we could see, amid the leafless trees, the bright faces of other spectators, too poor to pay the entrance fee, which were outlined against the autumn sky with the daintiness of the pale heads in Japanese painted fans.

The signal is given and the play begins. It is a terrible game, which by itself would suffice to indicate the differences between the Anglo-Saxon and the Latin word—a game of young bulldogs brought up to bite, to rush upon the quarry, a game fit for a race made for wild attack, for violent defense, for implacable conquests and struggles even to extermination. With their leather vests, with the Harvard sleeves of red cloth, and the Pennsylvania blue and white vests and sleeves, so soon to be torn—with the leather gaiters to protect their shins, with their great shoes and their long hair floating around their pale and pink faces, those scholarly athletes are at once admirable and frightful to see, as soon as the demon of the contest has entered into them. At each extremity of the field is a goal, representing, at the right end one of the teams, at the left the other. The entire object is to throw an enormous leather ball, which the champion of one or the other side holds in turn. It is in waiting for this throw that all the excitement of this almost ferocious amusement is concentrated. He who holds the ball is there, bent forward, his companions and his adversaries likewise bent down around him in the attitude of beasts of prey about to spring. All of a sudden he runs to throw the ball, or else with a movement of wild rapidity he hands it to another, who rushes off with it, and whom it is necessary to stop.

The brutality with which they seize the bearer of the ball is impossible to imagine without having witnessed it. He is seized by the middle of the body, by the head, by the legs, by the feet. He rolls over and his assailants with him, and as they fight for the ball and the two sides come to the rescue, it becomes a whole heap of twenty-two bodies tumbling on top of one another, like an inextricable knot of serpents with human heads. This heap writhes on the ground and tears itself. One sees faces, hair, backs or legs appearing in a monstrous and agitated melee. Then this murderous knot unravels itself and the ball, thrown by the most agile, rebounds and is again followed with the same fury. Constantly, after one of those frenzied entanglements and when the knot of players is undone, one of the combatants remains on the field motionless, incapable of rising, so much has he been hit, pressed, crushed, thumped.

A doctor whose duty it is to look after the wounded arrives and examines him. One sees those skilled hands shaking a foot, a leg, rubbing the sides, washing a face, sponging the blood which streams from the forehead, the eyes, the nose, the mouth. A compassionate comrade helps him in this occupation and takes the head of the fainted champion on his knee. Sometimes the unfortunate boy must be carried away. More frequently, however, he recovers his senses, stretches himself somewhat, wakes, and ends by getting up. He makes a few steps, leaning on the friendly shoulder, and no sooner is he thus able to progress than the game begins afresh, and he joins in again with a rage doubled by pain and humiliation.

Called Down.

From the Indianapolis Journal.

"We have met the enemy," began the enthusiastic young orator at the ratification meeting, "and they—"

"I'm durned if I know where we met 'em," dissented a grizzled man in one of the back seats. "They wasn't at the polls, sure."

JUST AWAY.

"I cannot say, and I will not say
That he is dead—he is just away!

With a cheery smile and a wave of the hand
He has wandered into an unknown land.

And left us dreaming how very fair
It needs must be since he lingers there.

And you—oh, you, who the wildest yearn
For the old-time step and the glad return—

Think of him faring on, as dear
In the love of There as the love of Here;

* * * * *

Think of him still as the same, I say:
He is not dead, he is just away!"

—James Whitcomb Riley.

NEW CHRISTMAS NOTIONS.

Some Substitutes for the Customary Tree Briefly Suggested.

The Christmas tree is to be supplanted this year. The mothers of the land and the aunts and the grown-up sisters have said: "Go to, now; we will devise something new. For, lo! These many years have our rooms been littered with evergreen spikes; these many winters past have our arms ached from tying impossible cherubs at impossible heights; these many Christmases has the fire department dreaded the union of lighted candles and dry branches. We will have something new."

* * *

One rather attractive plan, says the New York World, is to fit up a corner of the room as a miniature snow-field. A sheet is the best material to stretch down, and it should have tacked over it bits of raw cotton, with here and there a piece of tinsel to give the effect of glittering snow. On this should be placed a big sleigh. Big sleighs are not found in abundance in every household, of course, but the households which have no sleighs will have to depend upon the old-fashioned Christmas tree. The children's gifts should be packed in the sleigh and someone should be prepared to act as Santa Claus on Christmas morning and distribute the load of presents. The shafts should be wound with ground pine, and bells should be attached, so that the traditional Santa Claus jingle will be heard.

* * *

An enormous hollow log—the yule log in appearance, if not in reality—may be another receptable for gifts. A papier-mache log, with adjustable top, is the most convenient log for this purpose. When the top has been lifted and the presents have been distributed, the make-believe log may be burned in regulation style.

* * *

A row of little wooden shoes set in good, old fashioned German style about the fire is an excellent substitute for the customary row of stockings dangling above it.

* * *

It is a pretty, Christmas-like idea to have the various presents arranged in a snowdrift pile. All the gifts are arranged in white boxes, which have imitation snow in the form of spangled raw cotton tacked over their lids and sides. Bits of holly are stuck in, and the whole lot is piled loosely in one corner. The amount of fun which the little people extract from the appearance of the pile, and from the search for their own particular boxes more than pays for the difficulty of arranging the snowdrift.

It Usually Happens That Way.

From the Boston Transcript.

Mrs. Gray—For mercy's sake, where did you get that idiot of a girl?

Mrs. Green—She' a dunce, that' a fact. I got her at the intelligence office.

A Valid Distinction.

Almost all persons complain of bad memory after middle age. Did you in all your life ever meet a man who complained of bad judgment?—La Fayette Iron Record.

THE CITY WATER SUPPLY.

AMONG the varied subjects that concern the city's growth none play so important a part, none so deeply concern the public weal, nor so nearly touches every individual dweller in the city, as the quality and quantity of the water supply. Years ago the Scranton Gas and Water company commenced purchasing lands on Oak Run, Roaring Brook and Meadow Brook for reservoir sites, which they saw would be necessary to supply the rapidly increasing population of the city. Oak Run reservoir is a beautiful body of water on the Erie and Wyoming Valley railroad, about a mile above Dunnings. This dam flows the water back about a mile and a half, and has a storage capacity of about 400,000,000 gallons. The natural scenery surrounding this sheet of water is most delightful and attracts much attention from those traveling on the trains passing this section of the country, and the people living in that vicinity take a great deal of pride in the beautiful views which are everywhere presented. The Dunnings reservoir, with a capacity of 1,300,000,000 gallons, situated on Roaring Brook about half a mile above Elmhurst, on the line of the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western railroad, has a distributing reservoir on the line of Roaring Brook, about two miles above the borough of Dunmore; this is the principal distributing reservoir of the city. The water from Dunnings dam flows for about ten miles down Roaring Brook to Reservoir No. 7 and is distributed to the consumers in the city. It would certainly be impossible to invent a better system to insure a clear, pure water for drinking purposes than this system which nature has supplied. The capacity of Reservoir No. 7 is 85,000,000 gallons, running to the consumers through one 36-inch pipe, one 20-inch pipe and one 16-inch pipe. The service is sufficient, if necessary, to supply at a given point in case of emergency, such as for instance the corner of Lackawanna and Washington avenues, 30,000,000 gallons per day. The Meadow Brook reservoirs are on the Stafford Meadow Brook. The first one, situated about four miles above the junction with the Lackawanna river, is constructed the same as the Dunnings and Oak Run—a heavy stone masonry dam, all laid in Portland cement. It is used as a distributing reservoir, like that at No. 7, and has a capacity of 80,000,000 gallons. The water from this reservoir is also run through an 18-inch pipe to the consumer, which in a city the size of Scranton is an unusually important service, and something that few cities enjoy. About two miles above this, on the same stream, is the Williams' bridge reservoir, built with the same kind of masonry as the other dams, its capacity being 230,000,000 gallons. Connected with it is an 18-inch pipe which carries the water to the high service reservoir located at No. 6, which supplies Hyde Park and all the higher points of the city, thereby giving the city three independent service supplies, with a capacity of delivering at the several different points about 40,000,000 gallons per day.

The system now operated by the Gas and Water company furnishes the very best of water, and has enough in reserve to supply the city for a year. The company is at present clearing a large territory along Stafford Meadow Brook for another storage reservoir, which, when completed, will give a capacity of 1,400,000,000 gallons The result of this far-seeing policy on the part of the company is to gain an unlimited supply of water to meet whatever the needs of the city may be in the future.

GAS WORKS. Scranton people are very fortunate in having such excellent service in the use of gas. No city in the state is better supplied, and the rates compare favorably with the lowest, consumers paying but $1.23 per 1,000 feet; large consumers, $1.17. The plant has recently been rebuilt and enlarged, and now the facilities allow them to make 1,000,000 cubic feet in twenty-four hours

THE ELECTRIC LIGHT AND HEAT COMPANY.

Scranton the Best and Cheapest Lighted City in the State.

THE station and works of the Electric Light and Heat company are located on the banks of the Lackawanna, just below the gas works. This is the largest plant in the state outside the cities of Philadelphia or Pittsburg. There is no better service in any city in the country. Fourteen Brush arc light machines are operated, each with a capacity of sixty arc lights, making a total capacity of 840. This requires four large Corless engines of 800 horse power.

The company furnishes the street lights and does the bulk of the arc lighting in the city. Some idea of the facilities for furnishing arc lights can be gained from the fact that the company owns 115 miles of poles and wires, covering every section of the city.